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Taking their partners for some Strictly ballroom fundraising

LOCAL heroes are preparing to bring some glitz and glamour to The Mill Arts Centre as Strictly Banbury returns to town.

This weekend local men and women with no previous experience will don their sequined costumes and take to the stage for the annual charity dance contest.

Proceeds from ticket sales at the Saturday matinee, Saturday evening and Sunday evening performances will go to Dogs for Good and the Oxford Children's Hospital. Event organiser Glenda Harper, of Step By Step Dance School, said: "The Class of 2017 are all doing remarkably well."

Tickets for the evening events cost £17.50 and £10 for the Saturday matinee. Call the box office on 01295 279 002.



Contestants at a recent rehearsal ahead of Strictly Banbury this weekend

Area set for renovation after purchase of car dealership site

CANAL LAND IS SOLD FOR £2M

A REJUVENATION of Banbury's canalside area is a step closer after the purchase of a former brownfield site in Swan Close Road.

The former Antelope car dealership opposite Morrisons supermarket has been bought by Cherwell District Council for £2.15m.

It comprises a showroom, offices, a petrol station and garage and will be redeveloped as part of the council's long-term plans for the canalside, which will see areas such as Tramway industrial estate, Canal Street and Upper Windsor Street completely transformed between now and 2031.

Adrian Colwell, the council's head of strategic planning and the economy, said: "The canalside area along the Tramway industrial estate has been identified as a key site for regeneration within Cherwell District Council's approved local plan and that includes the former Antelope site.

"The canal is a unique feature within the town and we want to capitalise upon that by making it a focal point where people congregate for business, leisure and pleasure."

The 0.9 acre Nissan Antelope site was purchased from Newcore Capital Man-

Hannah Somerville

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agement after it closed in September last year.

It forms part of 71 acres of land due to be developed as part of the Banbury canalside regeneration project, as laid out in the district's adopted Local Plan, which outlines key development sites in North Oxfordshire until 2031.

The plan notes: "Canalside represents a major opportunity to redevelop a substantial area close to the town centre, to secure improved access to the town's railway station, the reintegration of the canal as a central feature of the town, and to provide new residential, commercial and retail development.

"Its redevelopment will make effective use of brownfield land and significantly reduce the need for greenfield development."

Eventually it is hoped 700 homes will be built alongside 15,000m2 of employment land for offices and businesses, as well as new footways and cycle ways.

The council also plans to build new pedestrian and cycle bridges over the Oxford Canal, the River Cherwell

and railway lines. Mr Colwell added: "The purchase of this site marks the first step towards transforming that whole area into a cosmopolitan mix of residential, commercial and retail uses which will create new homes, jobs and leisure opportunities for the town.

"This latest acquisition represents the start of an exciting future for Banbury which will feature the canal at the heart of it."

Exact plans for how the Antelope dealership be used have yet to be confirmed by the district council and it will be rented out in the short-medium term to generate income while Cherwell acquires the rest of the regeneration site.



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Design could become official festive stamp

A PINT-SIZED painter from Banbury could see his creation disseminated across the globe this winter if it wins a Royal Mail stamp design contest.

Harrison Mullins, aged four, has been shortlisted for the finals in the South East in the children's Christmas Stamp Design Competition.

The entry by the Queensway School pupil was chosen as one of the best from thousands of entries in the region.

Harrison's entry will go through to the next stage of the competition, where local judges will select the top two designs to go through to the national final.

Across the UK, the Royal Mail has received more than 200,000 entries from children in response to the question: "What does the Christmas season mean to you?"

After a final round in the

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summer, two designs will be selected to be approved by Her Majesty the Queen and go on sale on Tuesday, November 7.

Harrison has already won £100 in vouchers and £100 for his school and if he progresses to the next round he will receive a further two lots of £500 in vouchers and cash.

Stephen Agar, managing director of consumer and network access at Royal Mail, said: "Royal Mail is delighted to give two UK schoolchildren the chance to design an official Royal Mail Christmas stamp and see their winning designs adorn millions of items of mail over the festive season."

"Our winners will join a list of some of the most talented designers in the world to have designed a Royal Mail Christmas stamp."



The stamp design by Harrison Mullins, which is going to the South East regional finals

Young farmers prepare for county show

YOUNG farmers from across Oxfordshire are preparing for their annual county show.

On Sunday, May 28, the Earth Trust headquarters in Little Wittenham near Didcot will host the Oxfordshire Young Farmers' County Show.

From 10am to 5pm there will be a series of events and activities to publicise young farmers' clubs and raise funds for young farmers in the county.

There will be rural craft demonstrations, food stands and a dog show and young farmers will compete in more than 100 competitions and exhibitions, ranging from handling mini-diggers to cookery demonstrations and flower arranging.

Visitors to the centre can watch them milk a cow, make cocktails and skin a rabbit.

There will also be tug-of-war finals, blindfold cake decorating and obstacle races.

Other attractions will include a display of tractors and farm machinery throughout the ages and a motorcycle display.

There will also be a selection of food stands and craft stalls.

A statement on the website for the show said: "Every year Oxfordshire Young Farmers host a county show to celebrate the year and what Young Farmers' Clubs are all about – fun, learning and achievement.

Dogs are welcome on a lead. Visit oxcountyshow.com.



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Stand-off as duo hold the balance of power

Crunch time as alliances are formed or broken in the battle for County Hall

Matt Oliver
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A POWER struggle has put the fate of Oxfordshire County Council in the hands of two councillors.

Independents Les Sibley and Mark Gray have emerged as key players in the battle for County Hall, after the Conservatives failed to win a majority in last week's elections.

With the Tories short by just one seat, group leader Ian Hudspeth has been forced to negotiate with them to keep his party in charge of the authority.

And as the talks went on into this week, Mr Sibley, who represents Bicester West, revealed he and Mr Hudspeth were on the verge of a deal. Mr Gray also hinted he could join them.

Both were previously part of an alliance with the Conservatives but said they would reconsider that position on Friday after the election.

Their comments this week came after Labour and the Liberal Democrats admitted they had failed to rally enough support for an alternative 'rainbow coalition' over the weekend. Mr Sibley told the Oxford Mail: "I have not come to a final decision, but I am leaning towards an agreement with the Conservatives."

"I was part of alliance with them before and that has worked well. Even if you could get a rainbow coalition together, it would just be chaos anyway."

"It's hard enough to get two people to agree, let alone a collection of different parties and independent councillors."

Mr Hudspeth declined to comment on the possible deal, but Mr Sibley confirmed there were several issues he was 'pressing' the council leader on in exchange for his support.

These include assurances the Conservatives will prioritise plans in Bicester for new multi-million pound road crossings at the railway in Howes Lane and London Road.

Mr Sibley added: "I am elected to represent people in Bicester and so I want to make sure I get the best deal for them."

"With both these key schemes, people need to know what is going on."

Meanwhile, Benson and Cholsey councillor Mr Gray said he was in a 'difficult position' after speaking to opposition party leaders.

Over the weekend, Labour and the Liberal Democrats had suggested an alliance with him, Mr Sibley, fellow independents Lynda Atkins of Wallingford, and Neville Harris and Henley Residents' Group councillor Stefan Gawrysiak.

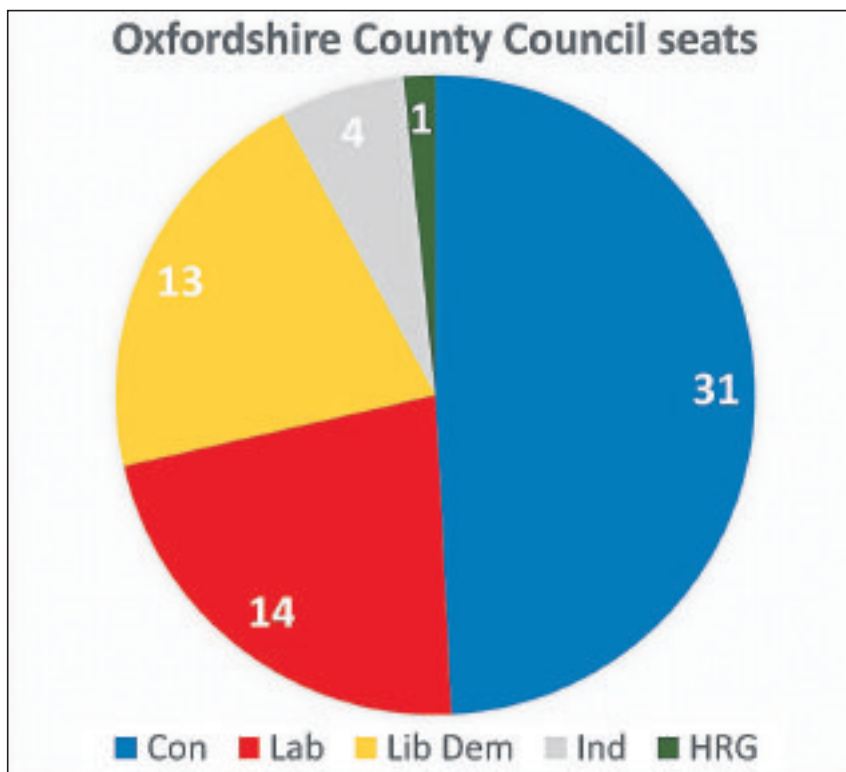
But it is understood Mr Harris has refused to join with them, meaning that – like the Conservatives – they would also be one short of a majority. The Didcot Ladygrove representative was not available for comment yesterday.

Mr Gray added: "Even if they all come together, it's going to be 31 against 31."

"No Tory councillors are going to switch sides so the only way for someone to get a majority is for one of us to go over to them."

"There is no agreement yet, but of course we are talking to each other."

In an appeal to the Liberal Democrats and independents, Labour boss Liz Brighouse had suggested major changes to the county council that would give all councillors a bigger say on decisions. At the moment the authority is



A chart showing the number of seats held by parties on Oxfordshire County Council



Independent councillors Les Sibley (left) and Mark Gray (right) who has emerged as key players in the battle for control of County Hall

controlled by a leader, elected by councillors, and cabinet members who can make executive decisions. Mrs Brighouse called for committees of councillors to be given control of decision-making again, similar to the system in place before November 2001.

She said: "We need a new process for decision-making that involves all councillors. At the moment power is far too centralised around the cabinet."

The idea was enthusiastically backed by Lib Dem group leader Richard Weber, who said: "It would be a much better way of involving everyone."

He warned the Tories would be forced to make concessions to that would favour some areas above others if they allied with independent, adding: "It is not a very sensible way to run a county."

Parties need to decide who will form an administration before a vote to elect the leader next Tuesday. The meeting will start at 10.30am in County Hall, Oxford.



Henley Residents' Group county councillor Stefan Gawrysiak

'Please be wise with your water'

OXFORDSHIRE farmers have said they are desperate for rain this weekend after the UK received less than half the average rainfall for last month.

The arid April followed the driest October to March in the country since 1995-96.

Homeowners have been advised to be 'wise with their water' and some farmers have said crops are now beginning to suffer.

George Bennett, who runs Sandy Lane organic farm in Tiddington just outside Oxford, said he had delayed planting annual vegetable crops including carrots, parsnips, sweetcorn and onions because his soil was simply too dry after the April drought.

He said: "If it goes on much longer it might be too late for parsnips to grow."

"We are now just wishing for a bit of rainfall this weekend."

The farm, which produces about 80 per cent vegetable crops and has 20 per cent livestock, is now hoping that its organic methods might have helped keep the soil in good condition and help it recover when the rains arrive.

The conditions have mostly been affecting Oxfordshire and other southern parts of England.

National Farmers' Union spokesman for the county Isobel Bretherton said the county had only had 5mm of rain in April.

She added: "There is cause for concern and we do need rain within the next two to three weeks."

Ms Bretherton added farmers were finding crops in the county had not grown as well as they should due to the conditions, and that grass for livestock was also drying out.

Met Office spokesman Grahame Madge said after a wetter patch towards the middle of this month, dry conditions are likely to return by the end of May.

Thames Water spokesman Becky Trotman said: "Most of our customers' supply comes from rivers so we're closely monitoring their flows and will have a clearer idea of our position in the early summer."

"As always, we encourage customers to use water wisely, whatever the weather."

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Mental health training plea to police bosses

POLICE line managers need more training around mental illness if the force is to reduce sickness levels, Thames Valley Police Federation has said. The force federation said it had seen 'huge increases' in the number of officers falling ill to stress, PTSD, anxiety and depression.

Craig O'Leary, chairman of the force's federation, said it would be very 'quick, simple and easy to train' line managers to become more aware of mental illness and try to identify it.

He added: "If something doesn't get identified at an early stage it can get worse and worse until such time that a member goes off sick, and we have then lost them for six or 12 months. In some cases they end up leaving through ill health retirement or they resign from the role.

"Actually if we can identify these things at an earlier stage we can perhaps prevent some of those losses."

The federation has recently funded, along with the force, a programme of training for peer supporters in mental health first aid. So far, about 30 officers have attended a two-day course.

Mr O'Leary said: "This is something I am really passionate about it. If we can identify these things at an earlier stage we can perhaps prevent some of those losses of people going off sick. But we can also help people to realise what is going on at an early opportunity so that they don't deteriorate to that level where they become really badly ill."

The federation also wants to see an improvement delivery of mental health service for officers.



Young people with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) in the grounds of Swalcliffe Park School in North Oxfordshire

Ofsted praise for specialist school

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A SPECIALIST school for boys with autism has received top marks from Ofsted for the third year running.

Following a full inspection in March this year, the regulator gave Swalcliffe Park School an 'Outstanding' rating.

The glowing report said the residential and day school outside Banbury offered 'significantly improved outcomes for children who need help, protection and care'.

Swalcliffe Park supports up to 41 boys aged 11 to 19 who have autistic spectrum disorder such as Asperger's Syndrome.

Many of the youngsters also

have additional needs arising from other diagnoses including ADHD, dyslexia, dyspraxia and language impairment.

In the report, inspectors said: "Young people's emotional and psychological well-being improves significantly."

"Their self-awareness, self-esteem and confidence have improved and they have achieved far more than had been thought possible."

Ofsted found that students' educational attainment was markedly better than it had been previously after a period at Swalcliffe.

It also praised the rapport between staff and students, work experience offered to youngsters through its cafe and 'fix-it club', as well as trips and leisure activities.

The school offers seven boarding houses for the young people under its care.

Inspectors said: "Each boarding house has a warm and nurturing atmosphere and environment within which young people relax together and enjoy time with each other."

"When young people are approaching an age at which they will need to leave and live more independently, the staff provide them with good support."

Principal Kiran Hingorani said: "We are delighted to have received an 'Outstanding' rating from Ofsted for Care. To receive this rating consecutively over the last three years takes hard work and a firm commitment to delivering the very best for our students... something we continuously strive to deliver."

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Intruders with weapons terrorise couple

A PAIR have been left traumatised after a group of masked men broke into their home brandishing a hammer, baseball bat and knife.

The man and woman were left with bruising after the targeted attack where four men, with covered faces, broke into their house in Appleby Close, Banbury, on Sunday, April 30, at about 9.10pm and struck the man, in his 50s, with a hammer.

The group then went upstairs and

attacked the woman, in her 40s, who was sleeping, before ransacking another bedroom.

One man who brandished a hammer is described as wearing a khaki green jacket with a peak on the hood of the jacket. He was black, about 6ft tall and spoke with an English accent.

Another man, who had the baseball bat, is described as black, under 6ft tall and of stocky build.

The man with a knife is described

as Asian, under 6ft tall, of slimmer build and spoke with an English accent. The last man is described as black.

Investigating officer Detective Constable Darren Pomroy said: "This was a specific and targeted attack. The offenders were looking for a specific person and took no property. If you saw anything or have any information which you feel might be relevant to this incident then please contact us via 101."

Hospitals' finances 'deteriorate rapidly'

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THE county's hospitals boss has warned staff about a 'rapid deterioration' of finances after revealing the trust overspent by more than £24m.

In a statement sent to the 12,000 employees across Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (OUH) chief executive Bruno Holthof said there needed to be 'immediate and significant' improvement.

He said actions were in place to 'control both staff pay and non-pay expenditure'.

Mr Holthof said the measures would not affect current employees but agency staff.

The action is being taken after the trust, which includes the John Radcliffe, the Churchill, the Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre and the Horton General Hospital in Banbury, overspent on staff pay by £5.5m and £19m on non-pay such as medical supplies and stationery.

Despite the amount spent by the trust on agency staff falling by more than £9m in the last year, it is said to be



Chief executive of Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust Bruno Holthof

a 'worse financial performance' than previous years.

In May 2016, the Oxford Mail revealed the trust spent a total of £41.3m to plug staffing gaps with bank and agency workers in 2015/16.

Mr Holthof said: "The trust is strengthening cost controls in the organisation in order to redirect the spending on delivering patient care. These measures do not affect the staff employed by the trust but will affect agency staff. We will accelerate the recruitment of medi-

cal and nursing staff on our payroll in order to reduce our monthly expenditure on agency staff.

"For example we need more anaesthetists and operating theatre nurses to meet the growing demand for surgery and direct employment by the trust is cheaper and better than using agencies."

Currently OUH has 106 vacancies, the majority of which are administrative roles, and in 2016/17 the budget for both trust employees and agency workers was £537.7m but the total cost rose to £563.4m.

Non-pay expenditure should have been at £357.6m but increased to £375.2m throughout the year.

Mr Holthof added: "To achieve this, we are reviewing all vacant posts and focus our recruiting efforts on medical and nursing staff needed to meet the fast rising demand for urgent and elective treatments.

"Additionally, we are implementing tighter restrictions on ordering goods and services that are not directly needed to deliver care to our patients. All these measures are being introduced in ways that protect patient safety

and the quality of our patient care is not being compromised. By implementing these controls, we are confident that our trust will be in good financial health so that we can continually improve and invest in our clinical services for the future."

In 2015/16 an extra £16.7m was spent on wages but £1.15m was saved on non-pay items.

The executive director of Healthwatch Oxfordshire Rosalind Pearce said: "This is a significant overspend, and we recognise that the management of Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is going to have to make some difficult decisions in order to address it.

"However we will be seeking assurances from the trust that it will be able keep to its pledge that the measures taken will not have a negative impact on either the quality of care or the safety of patients."

A report into the trust's financial performance for 2016/2017 was published on Friday and listed a number of reasons are listed for the overspend including a savings shortfall of £13.6 million.



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We are proud to produce trusted and honest stories

FIGHTING FAKE NEWS

Sara Taylor
MANAGING EDITOR

TODAY, the *Banbury Cake* joins forces with local and regional titles across the UK to launch a campaign to fight fake news.

As we approach the most significant national election in a generation, the need for independent local newspapers and their websites to report and explain the issues in an entirely neutral, honest and balanced way is essential.

This approach is in keeping with our ethos of always seeking to provide trusted news, campaigning on behalf of our communities, giving advertisers respected platforms to promote their services, exposing wrongdoing through painstaking investigations, and ensuring that the voice of residents and the business community is heard with clarity and authority.

In the past 12 months there has barely been a single global event that has not been infected by the suggestion that entirely fabricated information designed to deceive had been circulated indiscriminately via social media.



US presidential campaign brought the issue of fake news to the fore

Fake news takes many forms and operates at several levels. At its most extreme and democratically destructive, it comprises deliberately and maliciously contrived statements which are cynically distributed in the guise of real news with the aim of deceiving for political or financial gain.

More frequently, it is an unsubstantiated rumour indiscriminately posted on social media sites which rapidly gains credence, to the distress of those featured in it and the alarm of all who read it. Rep-

etition through shares and likes adds an undeserved authority. Comment, unlabelled as such, masquerades as truth; satire is confused with reality.

Fake news can be hard to identify. In November, a Buzz-Feed News analysis found that top fake presidential election news stories generated more total engagement on Facebook than top election stories from 19 major news outlets combined.

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Pupils send a message on cuts

Thousands of postcards urge Government to honour funding pledges

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PUPILS in Oxfordshire urged politicians to protect what they love about education as thousands of postcards were handed to the Education Secretary at a protest in London.

The Fair Funding for All Schools campaign ramped up the pressure on the Government yesterday ahead of the General Election by delivering the postcards, which call on Justine Greening to honour pledges to protect school funding.

Parents from the campaign's Oxfordshire branch were present at the event while at Carswell Community Primary School in Abingdon pupils used to chalk to write on the playground about what they love about school and do not want cut.

Fairer Funding for All Schools Oxfordshire claims financial pressures and a proposed new funding formula could cost schools in the county almost £30m by 2019.

Emma Jackson, whose son Ben took part in the chalking at Carswell Primary, said: "I am very concerned about funding.

"The children wrote all sorts of things in the playground, such as the forest school.

"It is really important that



L-R Connor Mennie (9), Holly Wolton (7) and Ben Jackson (7) at Carswell Primary School.

politicians understand that we need the funding so schools can continue to offer a diverse education for everyone.

"We do not want a very narrow curriculum. With forest schools for example it is important kids get the

chance to take risks and go out in the open, climb trees and light fires.

"I hope the event in London will have an impact and that the Government will realise that all parents are concerned about this."

Fair Funding for All Schools has

called on all parties and candidates in the General Election to commit to addressing the school funding issue.

Before the election was called the Department for Education had consulted on a proposed new funding

formula which it claimed would be fairer but that critics said would cost schools money.

The response to that consultation was due soon but has been delayed due to the election.

Fair Funding for All Schools Oxfordshire co-founder Helen Brockett, who was at the postcard event, said: "School funding is a major election issue for parents, grandparents and other concerned members of the community. Schools are struggling financially now.

"We need commitments from prospective MPs that they understand the importance of education and its impact on our children's wellbeing and life chances.

"Pupil funding across the county and the country needs increased investment."

The campaign has involved hundreds of parents in Oxfordshire and is supported by about 40,000 across England.

Last week on a visit to Oxford the Labour Party's Shadow Education Secretary Angela Rayner suggested money used to pay for free schools could instead be used to fund existing schools.

Speaking yesterday Fair Funding for All Schools co-founder Jo Yurky said: "We are delivering a message not just to Justine Greening but to all politicians.

"We want your commitment to fund our schools properly, so that every child gets the education they deserve and no child loses out."

The Government has said that schools in England are receiving more money than ever.

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Crime figures on the rise as police ‘outcomes’ fall

‘Numerical count does not reflect’ the truth of the situation, says force

By Michael Race
mrace@nqo.com

REPORTS of robberies, drugs trafficking, shoplifting and violent crimes have all increased in the past twelve months, police figures show.

Crime recorded in Oxford increased by 5.7 per cent from 2015/16 with statistics released by Thames Valley Police for the past financial year yesterday also showing a decrease in the amount of reports which police established an “outcome”.

Reports of robberies of businesses and individuals increased by 14.4 per cent in 12 months, with shoplifting reports rising from 1,454 to 2,003 over the same period.

Trafficking of drugs increased by 36.1 per cent with 113 reports compared to 83 the year before and violent crimes against people were recorded at 2,699, a 4.9 per cent rise from 2015/16.

Superintendent Joe Kidman, Police Commander for Oxford, said the increase in reports of drug traf-



LPA Commander Supt Joe Kidman

ficking reflected the “heavy investment” in tackling dealers from inside and out of the county. He added the force’s “robust response” to bur-

The latest figures for the most recent financial year were released yesterday following the *Oxford Mail*’s report last Friday showing a rise in crime across Oxfordshire. Over the past financial year, 14,936 crimes were reported in Oxford compared to 14,129 in 2015/16 and 13,720 in 2014/15. But police established an “outcome” for 2,605 reported crimes compared in 2016/17 to 3,194 the year before and 3,376 in 2014/15.

Outcomes to cases are marked when a caution, charge or summons has been made, but also when crimes reported are resolved at a community level, by another authority, or when there has been no prosecution. The force has to cut £22m from its budget for this financial year, on top of £88m saved over the past six years.

Supt Kidman said: “A numerical count of crimes does not reflect the seriousness of different cases and we continue to invest heavily in investigating challenging crimes such as domestic abuse, sexual offences and hate crimes.”

A spokeswoman said a reason for the fall in “outcomes” could be due to a large number of reports not being “directly crime-related”.

Thames Valley Police’s press office refused to provide officers for interview on the crime stats due to purdah election restrictions.

Drugs addict thief is jailed

A THIEF who stole from shops to fund his five-year drug addiction has been jailed for 80 weeks.

Jared Woodhouse, who had 53 convictions, claimed he struggled to deal with relationship and family problems, as well as his cancer diagnosis two years ago which left him needing a colostomy bag.

Woodhouse went into Banbury’s Cash Converters store, snatching a £230 KS Audio speaker which he hid under his T-Shirt, at about 1.45pm on August 18 last year.

The thief then hit Sainsbury’s at the Westgate shopping centre, pinching a £34 bottle of brandy at 1pm on January 10.

He pulled out a syringe needle when the store’s security guard attempted to detain him, declaring: ‘I have to go now’ before fleeing, prosecutor Alexandra Bull told Oxford Crown Court on Tuesday.

The 30-year-old, of O’Hanlon House, Oxford, stole a tip jar from Café Loco, in St Aldates, at 11pm two days later, and was caught with five wraps of crack cocaine on February 13.

Woodhouse also took a tip jar from Walton Street’s Jericho Tavern on March 10, as well as a mobile phone and £1,000 from Banbury’s Lismore Hotel five days later.

The defendant, who must pay a victim surcharge, admitted possessing a class A drug, four counts of theft, and common assault.

He was also in breach of a 54-week sentence, suspended for two years, which was activated by Judge Ian Pringle QC.

Your hosts Phil, Karen and Jacob look forward to seeing you soon!

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Citizen scientists reveal hidden water pollutants across county

Firm's workers among hundreds who used kits to test rivers for survey

Pete Hughes
phughes@nqo.com

WORKERS at a medical device manufacturing firm were among the hundreds of people who helped test Oxfordshire's water quality on one day.

Irem Bostanci and Luisa Teixeira, from Owen Mumford in Woodstock, tested for pollution in the River Glyme near their office on Tuesday as part of the WaterBlitz.

Their results and hundreds of others are already live on a new online map showing how much nitrate and phosphate testers found in rivers across the Thames Valley.

Conservation charity Wild Oxfordshire, which helps recruit volunteers for the annual survey, said it was delighted that so many testers were helping reveal hidden pollution.

Program manager Hilary Phillips said: "This year we sent out about 400 testing kits so we're expecting to get 800 samples for Oxfordshire."

"The results are helping to fill in real gaps in our knowledge."

"We need to improve freshwater



Irem Bostanci and Luisa Teixeira from Owen Mumford medical device manufacturers in Woodstock joining in with the 2017 Thames Valley WaterBlitz

habitats for wading birds, amphibians and delicate plants: there are a lot of species which are struggling because the water isn't clean enough."

The easy-to-use WaterBlitz kits, which volunteers ordered over the

internet, test for two pollutants – nitrates and phosphates.

These chemicals, which leak into rivers from fertilisers on farmers' fields, act as super fuel for algae which causes it to explode in an 'algal bloom'.

This mega-algae sucks all the oxygen out of the water, suffocating other plants, fish and insects there and downstream.

Volunteers on Tuesday took samples of their local river in just seconds and were able to upload their

readings to the live web map using a smart phone app.

The map was created by Oxford's EarthWatch institute, which processes the WaterBlitz results to build a picture of pollution across the Thames Valley. Since it launched in autumn 2015, Thames WaterBlitz volunteers have collected a total of 1,208 samples.

Project co-ordinator Luis Velasquez said: "Each WaterBlitz provides information from areas that would otherwise not be monitored and shows seasonal impacts of climate and land use change are important."

By identifying areas where nutrient discharges are more likely, Mr Velasquez said the WaterBlitz was helping regulatory bodies like the Environment Agency, research institutes and river trusts to improve waterways and reduce the risk of harmful pollution.

The Thames Valley WaterBlitz is also part of Earthwatch's Fresh-Water Watch project, a global study of the health of freshwater ecosystems.

The next Thames Valley WaterBlitz will be held on Monday, October 2.

Find out how to join in at wildoxfordshire.org.uk/waterblitz, call Wild Oxfordshire on 01865 407034 or email hilary@wildoxfordshire.org.uk.



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A shaggy-dog story indeed

MINDHORN (15, 89 mins) Comedy/Action/Romance. Julian Barratt, Andrea Riseborough, Russell Tovey, Essie Davis, Simon Farnaby, Steve Coogan, David Schofield, Harriet Walter. Director: Sean Foley. Seeing the truth is easy when you have robotic vision in director Sean Foley's loopy lark based around a fictitious 1980s TV detective show – catchphrase "It's truth time!" – best described as *The Six Million Dollar Man* meets *Bergerac* on the Isle of Man.

Scripted by actors Julian Barratt and Simon Farnaby, who nab two of the showiest roles, *Mindhorn* hits more targets than it misses with its delightfully daft cocktail of spoof, slapstick and whodunnit.

The search for a hospital outpatient, who is suspected of murder, quickly takes a back seat to the pratfalls, including flashes of old-fashioned physical humour like the lead actor chasing after a suspect and awkwardly clambering over a garden gate as it swings open beneath him. Extended cameos from Kenneth Branagh and Simon Callow, gleefully poking fun at their theatrical luvviness, deliver hearty laughs as the titular sleuth goes to squirm-inducing lengths to regain his poster boy status, albeit with a pot belly and a hairline that has receded down his back.

In the late 1980s, actor Richard Thorncroft (Barratt) set a nation's heart aflutter as *Mindhorn*, who could literally "see the truth" using his one robotic eye.

Twenty-five years later, fame has cruelly deserted him. Richard is overweight, gloriously self-deluded and has to beg his long-suffering agent (Harriet Walter) for unedifying work.

Out of the blue, she offers him a chance at redemption: return to the Isle of Man, where the TV series was filmed, to assist Chief Inspector Derek Newsome (David Schofield) in apprehending suspected serial killer, Paul Melly (Russell Tovey).

Melly is a deluded fan of the TV series and tells police he will "only speak to Inspector Mindhorn or more people are going to die!" Filmed on location on the Isle of Man, *Mindhorn* is a potty-mouthed escape from dreary reality that pickpockets chuckles and the occasional snort of derision as the cast

surrender to the script's lunacy.

RATING: 6/10

A DOG'S PURPOSE (PG, 100 mins) Drama/Romance. KJ Apa, Britt Robertson, Bryce Gheisar, Juliet Rylance, Luke Kirby, Dennis Quaid, John Ortiz, Kirby Howell-Baptiste and the voice of Josh Gad. Director: Lasse Hallström.

Love never dies, nor does the four-legged hero of Lasse Hallström's emotionally manipulative family drama.

Based on the novel by W Bruce Cameron, *A Dog's Purpose* bounds through decades of American history, tightly leashed to a sentimental mutt (voiced by Josh Gad), who is reincarnated as different breeds, but never forgets the smell of his first owner.

The point to Hallström's picture is to traumatised dog-loving audiences and the Oscar-nominated Swedish filmmaker encourages a deluge of saltwater tears with repetitive scenes of man's best friend saying farewell to distraught owners.

Gad's soothing omnipresent voiceover, which is less excitable than his scene-stealing turn as singing snowman Olaf in *Frozen*, underscores the sobs with gentle humour.

The imbalance in running time devoted to different sets of humans keeps most of the characters at arm's length and there is a gnawing predictability to the film's dewy-eyed final destination.

Golden retriever Bailey (voiced by Gad) has a brief first life in the 1950s – he is captured by men from the local dog pound and put to sleep.

In his second incarnation in 1961, he is rescued from a dangerously hot truck by eight-year old Ethan Montgomery (Bryce Gheisar) and his mother Elizabeth (Juliet Rylance). They persuade Elizabeth's hard-drinking husband Jim (Luke Kirby) to keep Bailey and Ethan enthusiastically trains the dog.

Ethan blossoms into a strapping high school senior (now played by KJ Apa) and falls head over heels in love with classmate Hannah (Britt Robertson).

A near fatal incident at the family home changes the course of Ethan's life and he is forced to say farewell to Bailey.

In subsequent incarnations, Bailey



Juliet Rylance and Bryce Gheisar in *A Dog's Purpose*

is a German Shepherd called Ellie and partners lonely Chicago police officer Carlos Ruiz (John Ortiz), and a Corgi called Tino, who facilitates a love match for Atlanta college student Maya (Kirby Howell-Baptiste). Fate eventually reunites Bailey – now a Saint Bernard – with Ethan (Dennis Quaid) but the master is a world-weary shadow of his former self.

A Dog's Purpose barks a familiar tune, with a couple of daring rescues that would have made Lassie wag her tail with pride.

Scenes of animal cruelty are inferred within the bounds of a PG certificate, while Gad's silky vocal performance trots a thin line between mawkish and amusing.

"Why did I eat so many meat logs?" he laments after one animal wolfs down copious hot dogs.

Audiences may be more reluctant to swallow Hallström's sugary film.

Rating: 5/10

Cake Bookworm

How To Be A Grown-up by Daisy Buchanan is published in paperback by Headline, priced £14.99 (ebook £6.49).

This is a warm hug of a book packed full of wise words of reassurance for millennials. Even if you think you're already a grown-up, there is something you can learn from Grazia's agony aunt and Guardian columnist Daisy Buchanan's painfully funny and reassuringly frank look at what it's like transforming into an adult in your 20s and 30s. Think of your most embarrassing moment on your journey to adulthood and Daisy's own experiences are both 10 times worse and laugh-out-loud funny. As she shares the pitfalls of the modern-day 20-something experience, from Insta-envy, fashion disasters and name-

less one-night stands, to green-eyed envy of engaged friends, hating your body, struggling with money and overcoming your fears, Daisy's wisdom is a soothing balm for anyone struggling with taking responsibility for themselves and forging a path into adulthood. She carefully builds up the reader's self-worth and confidence, reminding us to put ourselves first. You might look on this as a self-help book to reach for when feeling anxious, or after a break-up or losing your job, but anyone who is curious about understanding themselves better can benefit hugely. I know I did.

9/10

The Thirst by Jo Nesbo is published in hardback by Harvill Secker, priced £20 (ebook £9.49).

Jo Nesbo has been a professional footballer, economist, rock star and most recently, a bestselling writer. He's most known for his gritty thrillers that focus on troubled detective Harry Hole, and the Norwegian's latest offering, *The Thirst*, is as violent as ever. A blood-thirsty serial killer, known as the 'vampirist', is terrorising the streets of Oslo. While his method of using metal teeth to bite and kill his victims is rather far-fetched and fanciful, the fact he targets young women from Tinder makes it seem alarmingly believable. This is a tense and scary tale. If you're partial to bad dreams, don't read this just before bed. With constant twists along the way, it's another gripping read from the king of Scandinavian thrillers.

9/10

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Brexit negotiations set to affect one fifth of hospital trust's staff

PM urged to safeguard futures of EU nationals amid rising uncertainty

Hannah Somerville
hannah.somerville@nqo.com

ONE in five staff members in Oxfordshire's hospitals faces an uncertain future as Brexit negotiations get under way.

New data from the House of Commons Library shows Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust has the second-highest proportion of EU nationals in the country.

Staff from the EU make up 19.6 per cent of the trust's workforce and take up about 2,300 roles, from doctors and nurses to cleaners, porters and technicians.

Mark Power, the trust's director of organisational development and workforce, said the result of the referendum had led to 'real concern'.

He said: "The anxiety caused by Brexit is acknowledged and is being managed locally."

"However, a clear statement at national level confirming the continued protection of employment rights for our non-UK staff would be most welcome."

"We have joined other NHS em-



The emergency department at the John Radcliffe Hospital

ployers in calling for this clarification, because without it we face the real risk of losing a substantial and vital part of our workforce."

OUH, whose chief executive Bruno Holthof is Austrian, has recently employed a 'significant' number of clinical staff from Spain, Portugal, Italy and Poland.

Following the Brexit vote in June, it held a special lunch for all col-

leagues recruited from outside of the UK to enforce how much they were valued.

It gave staff a chance to talk about their home countries and how they came to join OUH.

Spanish citizen Jose Martinez, a nurse at the John Radcliffe Hospital, said the proportion of EU nationals in the emergency department was even higher.

He said: "You only need to go into the department or go up to the ward. We are everywhere. Without us it would be a huge mess."

Mr Martinez, who has an English wife and two children, said he hoped to stay in the UK but felt uncertain about the future.

The 27-year-old said: "From my department we have been given assurance that we are going to carry

on with our normal employment."

"But at the moment I feel a bit worried. Things are changing; I'm going to wait and see how things go."

"Many of my colleagues are remaining in Spain now. Some were thinking about trying to come here but now they're reluctant."

Mr Power added: "We continue to provide as much direct support and reassurance as possible."

"Unfortunately, it is highly unlikely that the domestic labour market will be capable of supplying sufficient numbers of trained staff in the short to medium term."

The figures were unearthed by the Labour Party in a bid to put pressure on the government to guarantee EU citizens' status after Brexit.

Across the UK more than 60,000 EU nationals are working in the NHS, with one in 10 NHS doctors coming from the EU.

Jonathan Ashworth MP, the Shadow Secretary of State for Health, said: "Our NHS is facing an unprecedented crisis and we simply cannot afford to lose these 60,000 staff."

"And yet Theresa May seems content with using EU workers as bargaining chips in her hard Brexit negotiations. EU nationals in our health service deserve to have their futures safeguarded."

"Labour is leading calls for this substantial minority to immediately be given a right of remain."

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Events

THURSDAY

Big Diesel 'Thrash': Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway, Station Approach, Station Road, Chinnor. Five guest heritage diesels and resident Clayton. 9am. Adult £20, child £10. 07979 055366.

Abingdon Artists' talk on Stanley Spencer: Northcourt Centre, Northcourt Road, Abingdon-on-Thames. With art historian Alice Foster. 7.30pm. £4 non members, members free. 01235 528813.

Cheese and wine tasting with modern art: Dantzig Gallery, 1 Market Street, Woodstock. An evening of cheese and wine pairing in association with Love Wine of Woodstock. Also see the Spring selection of modern art. 7pm. £12.50. 01993 812000.

Sunningwell and District Gardening Club Meeting: Sunningwell Village Hall, Sunningwell Road, Sunningwell. Local horticulturalist Ann Dawson will be telling members how to open their garden for the National Gardens Scheme. 7.30pm. £3.

The Great Barn Wedding Fair: The Great Barn, Upper Aynho Grounds, Aynho. 6pm. Free. 01869 810823.

West Oxon Decorative and Fine Arts Society: Methodist Church, High Street, Witney. Lecture by Sally Hoban, The Glasgow Girls – Women in Art and Design in Glasgow 1890-1920. Refreshments from 6.45pm. 7.30pm. Visitors £6. 01993 776568.

FRIDAY

BSDC Spring Ball: General Foods Sports & Social Club, Spiceball Park Road, Banbury. Banbury Social Dancing Club Spring Ball. Ballroom, Latin and popular sequence dancing to music by Sugar & Spice. 8pm. 01295 258426.

Charity Race Night: African Children's Fund, 10 Market Place, Faringdon. Bet on the outcome of six screened horse races. Tickets include entry and supper. From charity's Faringdon, Grove, Lechlade or Witney shops. Over 18s only. £10. 7pm. 01367 244480.

Museum Book Group: Vale & Downland Museum, 19 Church Street, Wantage. 2pm. Free but asked to support the museum cafe. 01235 771447.

Nearly New Sale: St John the Evangelist Primary School, Bluebell Way, Carterton. 3pm. Free.

SATURDAY

Bicester & Kidlington Ramblers: Meet at the car park Great Tew. A leisurely nine-mile walk to Barford St Michael, returning via South Newington. 10am. Free. 01869 369603.

Charity Plant Sale: Christ Church, Northcourt Road, Abingdon. Plant sale to raise funds for The Lily Foundation. 10am. Small fee for adults; children free.

Cotswold Line Promotion Group AGM: WI Hall, New Road, Moreton-in-Marsh. The annual general meeting of the CLPG. There will be guest speakers from the railway industry, including Great Western Railway. 10.30am. Free. 01608 651797.

Family Fun Day: Stanford in the Vale Village Hall, Huntersfield, Faringdon. Games, food, climbing wall, archery, slacklining, bouncy castle, fire engine, silent auction, raffle. 12pm. Free. 07966 255721.

Family Fun Golf Day: Kirtlington Golf Club, Kirtlington. A range of fun golf games and activities for kids who are interested in golf, plus face painting, bouncy castle and a BBQ. 2pm. Free. 01869 351133.

Fritwell Market: Fritwell Village Hall, Fewcott Road, Fritwell. Local produce, crafts, gifts, cards. 10am. Free. 07788 560174.

Grand Book and Plant Sale &

Coffee Morning: Chilton Village Hall, Church Hill, Chilton. For Christian Aid. 10am. Free. 01235 834503.

Hanborough Mammoth Garage Sale: Long Hanborough. Thirty garages taking part. Maps of the garages are available from the Methodist Church from 9.30am where teas, coffees and cakes will be on sale. In aid of the Methodist Church Property Fund. Free. 01993 881711.

Let's Play Croquet: Eynsham Cricket Club, Cassington Road, Eynsham. We will provide the equipment and club members will be available to introduce you to this competitive and enjoyable sport. 2pm. Free. 07876 718789.

Long Wittenham May Fair: Long Wittenham Primary School, High Street, Long Wittenham. 12pm.

Naturist Swimming: Didcot Wave, Newlands Avenue, Didcot. Over-18s only unless accompanied by parents. 7.15pm. £5. 07941 435021.

Otmoor Garden Society Plant Sale: Community Hall, Fencott Road, Charlton on Otmoor. A wide range of perennials, half hardy annuals and annuals for sale. 11am. Free. 01865 376225.

Paws for Tea Party & Dog Walk: Blue Cross, London Road, Lewknor. Entry to the tea party is free, and tickets for the dog walk are £10 per dog to include a doggie bag full of goodies, as well as a voucher for a free hot drink and slice of cake. The walk leaves the centre at 10.30am, and the tea party is 12-3pm. Email events@bluecross.org.uk for details. 0300 777 1500.

Plant Sale: Market Place, Wallingford. Wallingford Gardening Club. 9am-12pm. 01491 836867.

Singing for Performance with Lin Marsh: Amey Theatre, Park Road, Abingdon. Internationally renowned singing teacher Lin Marsh gives a workshop and participants will be taught songs to be performed as part of the Resonate performance that evening. The workshop is suitable for anyone aged 14 or above. Places are strictly limited and prices, which include lunch and other refreshments. 10am. £5. 01235 849063.

SO Food Festival: Bridge Villa Camping and Caravan Par, The Street, Crowmarsh Gifford. Taste, Star chefs, stalls, classes and more. 10.30am. Adults £5, OAPs £3, U18s Free. 01491 837621.

Tree Climbing: Earth Trust Centre, Little Wittenham. Use ropes and harnesses to access the treetops. One-hour sessions with The Great Big Tree Climbing Company. Booking essential: online only at www.earthtrust.org.uk/whatson (incurs a booking fee). 10am. £20. 01865 407792.

SUNDAY

Intermediate Wildlife Photography: Earth Trust Centre, Little Wittenham. Professional photographer Andrew Walmsley will cover wide angle tricks. 10am. £80. 01865 407792.

National Garden Scheme: Meadow Cottage, Christmas Common, Watlington. Limited wheelchair access. Plant sale. Dogs on leads. Home-made teas. 12pm. Adult £5; chd free. 01491 613779.

National Garden Scheme: Various locations, Steeple Aston. Wheelchair access (except at Primrose Gardens). Dogs on leads. Plant sale. Home-made teas in village hall. 2pm. Combined adult £6; children free. 01869 340512.

Open Garden: Bridewell Gardens, The Walled Garden, Wilcote, North Leigh. Bridewell Organic Gardens and Vineyard is a therapeutic horticulture project that provides a recovery service for people with mental health issues. 2pm. £3.50, children free. 01993 868313.

Oxford Town and Gown 10k: Oxford University Parks, Oxford University Parks, Oxford. Run the 10k routes around the

To get an event of any kind listed here, enter the details into our easy-to-use online database at thisisoxfordshire.co.uk/events

Please add your event no later than ten days before the day of publication.

closed streets, parks and rivers of Oxford, in aid of Muscular Dystrophy UK. All runners receive a finisher T-shirt and medal when after the race. 9am. £23-£25. 020 7803 4828.

Oxford Town and Gown Junior 3k: Oxford University Parks, Oxford University Parks, Oxford. Join in the increasingly popular Junior Fun Run, a chip-timed 3k race for 9-15 year olds, held just before the adult 10k race. 9am. £12. 020 7803 4828.

Scything: Earth Trust Centre, Little Wittenham. Learn the traditional way to tackle tall grass and long weeds, with expert Clive Leeke. 9.30am. £50. 01865 407792.

Wildlife Lecture – Linescapes, Hugh Warwick: Braziers Park, Braziers Lane, Ipsden, Wallingford. Annual Glaister Lecture – Remapping and Reconnecting Britain's Fragmented Wildlife. 11am. Free but booking essential. 01491 680221.

World Record Attempt & Charity Fun Day: Blue Cross, Shilton Road, Burford. We will be attempting to set the Guinness World Record for the largest gathering of people dressed as cats alongside our second annual charity fun day. Register on 0300 777 1974 or email events@bluecross.org.uk Plus stalls, music, funfair, food and drink, as well as a dog show. 11am. £1 entry for over 16's. 0300 777 1974.

MONDAY

Women's Self Defence and Fitness Class: The Pavilion, Roosevelt Road, Long Hanborough. Ages from 13 upwards welcome. 8pm. £5. 07834 022463.

TUESDAY

Bicester & Kidlington Ramblers: Meet at the village hall, Piddington. A leisurely 4.5-mile circular walk from Piddington via Muswell Hill. 10am. Free. 01869 248230.

Painting Demonstration of 'Sky and Water' in Oils by Mike Bragg: Centre 70, Kinegrove, off Goldsmiths Lane, Wallingford. 7.30pm. £3, free to members of WADACC. 01491 681400.

Tea Dance: Woodstock Social Club, 44 Oxford Street, Woodstock. 2pm. £2. 01993 811473.

WEDNESDAY

The Art & Science of the Lunar Society: Trinity Church, Conduit Road, Abingdon. The Arts Society/Abingdon Decorative and Fine Arts Society (ADFAS) monthly lecture. Sally Hoban will talk about The Art and Science of the Lunar Society of Birmingham. 2pm. £6. 01235 523370.

Music

THURSDAY

Truck Store, 101 Cowley Road, Oxford: Little Brother Eli. Acoustic set from local blues-rockers. 6pm. Free.

The Cock Inn, Combe: Nick Gill. Classic jazz and ragtime piano/vocals. 8pm. Free.

The Wheatsheaf, 129 High Street, Oxford: Phil Peskett. The Spin Jazz Club. Jazz pianist accompanied by The Spin Trio. 8.30pm. £10, £8 (concs), £6 (students).

Unicorn Theatre, Checker Walk, Abingdon: Ross Couper and Tom Oakes. 7pm. £14.

FRIDAY

Lord Nelson, Charlton Road, Wantage: The Summits. Free. 9pm. 01235 763415.

Old Mill Hall, School Lane, Grove: Magical Musicals concert. www.WSMC-Music.co.uk. £9 (£7 concessions). 7pm.

Wine Vaults Banbury, Parsons Street, Banbury: Joe Holic. Free. 9.30pm. 01295 261281.

SATURDAY

Amey Theatre, Park Road, Abingdon: Resonate. Concert including Out of the Blue, The Lin Marsh Singers, The Marsh Tompsett School of Dance, The Oxford Drum Troupe and Richard Soames. £10 / £8. 7.30pm. 01235 849063.

East Hagbourne Village Hall, 53 Main Road, East Hagbourne: Magical Musicals concert. www.WSMC-Music.co.uk. £9 (£7 concessions). 7pm.

St Andrews Church, Main street, Letcombe Regis: Ninebarrow. Award-winning folk duo from Dorset. £12.50 in advance, under 14s free. 7pm. 01235 411182.

St Leonard's Church, Eynsham, High Street, Eynsham: Eynsham Choral Society: Mendelssohn's Elijah. £12 (£10 concessions). 7.30pm.

The Dolphin, 2 St Mary's Street, Wallingford: Mudslide Morris & the Revelators. Free. 9pm. 0779 064 6028.

The Windrush Club, 106 High Street, Witney: Deano & Claire. Free. 9pm. 01993 702207.

The Windrush Inn, Burford Road, Witney: Elton John Tribute. £15. 7pm. 01993 702612.

O2 Academy, 190 Cowley Road, Oxford: Desert Storm, Kontek, The Reaper, Shattered Compass, A Nightmare Upon Us. Metal/hard rock. 6pm. £7 (adv), £9 (otd).

New Theatre, 2 George Street Oxford: Steve Hackett. Genesis Revisited. Former Genesis guitarist and prog rock superstar. 7.30pm. £31.65-£33.65.

SUNDAY

St Nicolas Church, Market Place, Abingdon: David Mears clarinet with Elizabeth Hayes piano. £10/£9. 3pm. 07775 904626.

The Maytime Inn, Asthall: Vince Freeman. Free. 3pm. 01993 822068.

Oxford Wine Café, 38 South Parade, Summertown: Adrian Ingram & Darren Dutson-Bromley Trio. Jazz guitars. 6.30-9pm. Free.

MONDAY

Rose Revived, Newbridge, Witney: Alvin Roy's Reeds Unlimited. Jazz. 7.30pm. Free.

The Bullingdon, 162 Cowley Road, Oxford: Howie Payne. Former 'Stands' frontman with solo show. 7.30pm. £10.

TUESDAY

The Bullingdon, 162 Cowley Road, Oxford: The Coathangers. Punk trio. 7.30pm. £8.

The White Hart, 126 Godstow Road, Wolvercote: Early English Folk Ensemble. Trad folk. 8pm. Free.

WEDNESDAY

The Comrades Club, Newbury Street, Wantage: Jeff Barnhart & the Harlem Knights. Jazz piano and vocals. Zelda's Jazz Room. 8pm. £11.

The Wheatsheaf, 129 High Street,

Oxford: Northtown Scarecrows. Blues rock trio. 8pm.

Stage

Burton Taylor Studio, Beaumont Street, Oxford: Until May 13, *I Marcus*. A black comedy about the underbelly of youth culture that examines what lurks beneath the 'banter'. 7.30pm. £6. May 16-20, *I Know You*. 7.30pm. £6. 01865 305305.

The Bullingdon, 162 Cowley Road, Oxford: May 13, Bethany Black, Andrew Stanley and Dan Thomas. Glee comedy. 7.45pm. £15.95. 01865 810000.

The Old Fire Station, 40 George Street, Oxford: May 11, Richard Herring: The Best. 8pm. £15. 01865 263990.

O'Reilly Theatre, Keble College, Blackhall Road, Oxford: May 11-13, *I Want a Country*. Performed in Greek with English surtitles. <http://iwantacountry.eventbrite.co.uk> 8.30pm plus Sat (mat) 2.30pm. £11 (£7 concs).

Oxford Playhouse, Beaumont Street, Oxford: May 12-13, Richard Alston Dance Company. 7.30pm. £11.50-£22. May 16-20, *I Capture the Castle*. 7.30pm. £11.50-£28. 01865 305305.

New Theatre, George Street, Oxford: May 15-20, Sister Act. 7.30. £17.90-£55.40 plus £4 transaction fee. 0844 871 7615.

The North Wall Arts Centre, South Parade, Summertown: Until May 11, *The Lounge*. 7.30pm. £14 (concession £12, members £10). May 16, *Octopus*. A post-Brexit satire that explores what it's like to be treated as a foreigner in your own land. 8pm. £14 (concession £12, members £10). 01865 319450.

Amey Theatre, Park Road, Abingdon: May 11, NT Live: *Obsession*. 7pm. £12 / £10. 01235 849063.

The Beacon, Portway, Wantage: May 11, NT Live: *Obsession*. 7pm. £15. 01235 763456.

Chipping Norton Theatre, Spring Street, Chipping Norton: Until May 20, *The Island*. Drama of defiance and determination draws on the stories that linger from Robben Island where Nelson Mandela was held prisoner. 7.45pm. Tickets: £15, £13 conc. £5 U26. 01608 642350.

Cornerstone Arts Centre, Station Road, Didcot: May 11-12, *Velvet Petal* by Fleur Darkin. 7.30pm. £14. May 13, *Katy Brand – I was a Teenage Christian*. 8pm. £14. 01235 515144.

Corn Exchange, Market Place, Wallingford: May 17-20, *Return to the Forbidden Planet*. Sinodun Players 7.30pm with Saturday matinee at 2.30pm, £15 (under 18s £12 Weds, Thurs & Sat mat) www.cornexchange.org.uk 01491 825000.

Eynsham Village Hall, Back Lane, Eynsham: May 17, *Humble Boy*. By Charlotte Jones. From the author of the current TV series *The Halcyon*, comes this tale of dysfunctional families, reversed social hierarchy and humility set in the idyllic Cotswold countryside. 7.30pm. £9/£8 (£18 inc two-course supper & show on Friday). 07721 744020.

Middleton Cheney Village Hall, The Green, Middleton Cheney: May 11-13, *Drinking with Angelika: A Musical Play*. 7.30pm. £10/£8 concessions. 07849 062739.

The Mill Arts Centre, Spiceball Park Road, Banbury: May 12, *Gilbert (No Sullivan)*. 7.30pm. £14.50. May 13-14, *Strictly Banbury 2017*. 2pm and 7.30pm Sat, 7.30pm Sun. £17.50. May 19, *Titter Ye Not*. 7.30pm. £14. 01295 279002.

CakeSport

banburycake.co.uk/sport



Banbury's Craig Haupt hit 15 fours and a six in his 116

Haupt's ton gets Banbury started

Batsman's knock sets up opening-day victory against Tring

CRAIG Haupt struck 116 to help steer Banbury to a 23-run victory at home to Tring Park on the first day of the Home Counties Premier League season. The opener hit 15 fours and a six, sharing lengthy partnerships with Lloyd Sabin (49) and Tom Bartlett (44), before being run out in the final over as they reached 261-4. A 117-run second wicket partnership kept the visitors well in the game. But skipper Shelvin Gumbs (68) was eventually caught leg before by Richard

CRICKET	
West, who went on to record figures of 4-40. Banbury could not relax, though, and conceded 34 runs in extras as Tring stubbornly pressed on. But the hosts finally wrapped up a victory when Charles Hill ran out Haseeb Ali to dismiss Tring for 238 with just seven balls remaining.	
BANBURY	
C Haupt run out.....	116
T Bartlett c Snookes b Payne.....	44
L Sabin c Gumbs b Woodland.....	49
R West c Gumbs b Woodland.....	30
C Hill not out.....	7
W Hawtin not out.....	0
Extras.....	261
Total (4 wickets, 50 overs).....	261
Fall: 1-92, 2-194, 3-245, 4-261.	
Bowling: Stanway 10-2-42-0, Snookes 3-0-21-0, Rimmington 3-0-16-0, Woodland 10-0-59-2, Payne 10-0-36-1, Ali 9-0-46-0, Gumbs 5-0-35-0.	
TRING PARK	
A Woodland b West.....	16
A Dixon b Wilkins.....	48
S Gumbs lbw West.....	68
A Ali c Wilkins b West.....	20
M Payne b Wilkins.....	20
R Richard c Wright b West.....	3
S Rimmington run out.....	1
K Shah c Hill b Sabin.....	8
H Ali run out.....	14
S Stanway b Wright.....	1
L Snookes not out.....	5
Extras.....	34
Total (all out, 48.5 wickets).....	238
Fall: 1-36, 2-153, 3-153, 4-196, 5-197, 6-197, 7-207, 8-219, 9-225.	
Bowling: Taylor 5-0-36-0, Hill 8-2-29-0, West	

10-0-40-4, Wright 9.5-0-44-1, Sabin 9-0-46-1, Wilkins 7-0-35-2.

Banbury 20pts, Tring Park 6

Banbury 2nd succumbed to a five-wicket defeat at Long Marston.

Batting first, Banbury were bowled out in the 50th over for 182, Justin Lambden top-scoring with 62 and Mark Pallett hitting 50, while Alastair Bee claimed 5-56 for the hosts.

Marston's reply was led by an excellent 101 not out from Archie Hammond, around whom the innings was built as the home side reached 183-5 in the 46th over, Ollie Murrey taking 3-17.

Long Marston 25pts, Banbury 2nd 8

STARS with Claire Petulengro

Service provided by IMS Leeds LS1 8LB. Calls cost 60p per minute at all times

ARIES

Mar 21-Apr 19

I can see that many of the signs are talking for the sake of it this week and you could end up having to cover for someone who is not as innocent as they first claimed to be. Just make sure you know how far is too far to go when covering up for close ones. Ask yourself if those concerned would do the same for you. Ring now to hear how Saturn promises renewed financial opportunities for you.

0906 585 4360

LIBRA

Sep 23-Oct 22

I see you've gone out of your way to support those you love. However, they only seem to have taken note of what you haven't done, rather than what you have. This week you get the chance to find middle ground. It will however mean neither of you bringing up the past. News of new beginnings others are giving you creates new hope. Call to hear why Scorpios play a key role in your future.

0906 585 4366

TAURUS

Apr 20-May 20

Can you feel the air of change in your stars Taurus? I can and I know that if you allow yourself to feel your way through the events ahead, then you'll be able to cope with and succeed in anything. Someone who was once a part of your past wants to be a part of your future. The question is, do you want them to be? Ring now so I can give you the self assurance to trust your own decisions.

0906 585 4361

SCORPIO

Oct 23-Nov 21

Your ruling planet Mars has made it more difficult than you had hoped to get things back to normal. What you see this week that you couldn't see before, is that you needed to have everything stripped back bare to appreciate all you had and lost. Eat that humble pie with a smile. It's taking you to a good place. Ring now so we can talk about family differences.

0906 585 4367

GEMINI

May 21-Jun 20

The temptation is strong to say the very things you shouldn't. You no longer think what it, you think when and how. This is a really good week to try for the things you were lacking confidence in earlier in the year. Dream big Gemini. The stars and your close ones are behind you. Ring now to hear why it's worth turning up early to all meetings in the days ahead.

0906 585 4362

SAGITTARIUS

Nov 22-Dec 21

Before you start sticking up for close ones, try to find out the whole story. You may not have all the facts. Those you love are very good at pulling the wool over your eyes but, then again, they do say that love is blind! Fellow Sagittarians are worth joining forces with on both a personal and a professional level. Ring now to hear why you can afford to ask for more.

0906 585 4368

CANCER

Jun 21-Jul 22

Your story is reading like a novel lately. Make sure it's one that you are writing and that you're not allowing other people's dreams and wishes to rewrite what should essentially be your story. A break in your inner circle brings shock and surprise and, in a strange way, offers you a sense of freedom. Ring now so we can ensure you make your life the very best it can be.

0906 585 4363

CAPRICORN

Dec 22-Jan 19

You have money on your mind and dreams in your heart. The question I have Capricorn is can those who made the promises really come up with the goods? You'll know by the end of this week. If the answer is no, then make sure you put a distance between you and anyone who has made false promises. Ring now to hear why this is the perfect week to sign important contracts.

0906 585 4369

LEO

Jul 23-Aug 22

I know you want to move forward Leo, but how can you do that without putting the past behind you? Use this week to tie up loose ends and to lay ghosts to rest once and for all. You are the master of your own destiny, but you must still acknowledge that there is an order to the way things must be done. Call now to hear why it's worth taking gambles in love.

0906 585 4364

AQUARIUS

Jan 20-Feb 18

Don't regret what you've done. You have so many dreams than you can afford to put what hasn't worked behind you and instead focus on what can be achieved. A friendship which had lapsed is heading back into your life with enough contacts to make a better year ahead, full of opportunities for you to enjoy. Ring now to hear why it's imperative to pay debts this week.

0906 585 4370

VIRGO

Aug 23-Sep 22

There is a really fun feel to your chart, where you can at last blow off some steam. Previously you had to be who others wanted you to be. The restraint you've had to show has been harder for you than close ones realised. This is your time now. Embrace it, and keep eyes only on the future to keep a new character as interested as you want them to be. Ring now for the full story.

0906 585 4365

PISCES

Feb 19-Mar 20

This is a great week to break any bad habits you've adopted. You should have learned by now that yours is a sign which is prone to giving their whole life to anything they are involved in. That's why you need to use the determined aspects from Mars to break away from what's not working and to focus on what can and will. Ring now to hear how travelling for love makes the impossible possible.

0906 585 4371

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Personal Messages

DEAR HEART OF JESUS

in the past I have asked for many favours, this time I ask for this special one (mention it). Take it Dear Heart of Jesus and place it within your own broken heart where your father sees it, then his merciful eyes it will become his favour not mine. Amen. Say for 3 days. Promise publication and favour will be granted. Never known to fail. D.S

DEAR HEART OF JESUS

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18. Mail Order and One Day Sale Advertisements. These types of advertisements are accepted at the sole discretion of the Advertisement Manager or his/her deputies. All such advertisements must be pre-paid and copy submitted at least 7 working days before publication. The Publisher reserves the right to refuse to publish any such advertisement containing copy which we find not acceptable and will not be responsible for any costs incurred by the Advertiser or his Agents, either before or after such refusal.
- 19a. **SEX DISCRIMINATION ACT.**
No advertisement which indicates or can reasonably be understood as indicating an intention to discriminate on the grounds of sex (e.g. by inviting invitations from only male or only females) may be accepted unless exempted from the requirements of the Sex Discrimination Act. A statement must be made at the time the advertisement is placed, saying which of the exceptions in the Act is considered to apply.
- 19b. **RACE RELATIONS ACT.**
The Publisher reserves the right not to accept recruitment advertisements which request a photograph or hints of discrimination on racial grounds in support of an application.
20. **TRADE DESCRIPTIONS ACT**
All advertisements will be accepted only on the express condition that the Advertiser warrants that the advertisement does not in any way contravene the provisions of the Trade Descriptions Act 1968.
21. Business Opportunities Advertisements are accepted at the sole discretion of the Advertisement Manager or his/her deputies and will appear in the Classified section under the appropriate heading. Readers are recommended to take professional advice before entering into any obligations.
22. Dating Agencies and advertisements for companions are accepted at the sole discretion of the Advertisement Manager or his/her deputies and will appear in the Classified section under the appropriate heading. Readers are requested to consider very carefully and make the fullest enquiries before giving any personal details.
23. All orders from Advertising Agencies are governed by the standard conditions agreed between the Newspaper Society and the Institute of Practitioners in Advertising. The Director's personal guarantee given to the Newspaper Society at the time of recognition is deemed to be part of these conditions of acceptance.
24. All gross advertising rates (except Classified Lineage) are subject to a 0.1 per cent Advertising Standards Board of Finance surcharge, payable by Advertisers to help finance the self regulatory control system administered by the Advertising Standards Authority.
25. If an Advertiser in receipt of series or volume discount cancels before fulfilling the terms for the discount, the Publisher reserves the right to make a surcharge up to the full published rates for the type of advertisement.
26. The placing of an order for the insertion of an advertisement shall amount to an acceptance of the above conditions and any conditions stipulated on an Advertiser's order form or elsewhere shall be void insofar as they are in conflict with them.



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NEW RENTAL PRICE



BARFORD ST MICHAEL
£750 pcm
A two bedroomed middle terraced house situated in this pretty village South West of Banbury within the Warriner School catchment area.
| porch | kitchen | lounge | conservatory | one double bedroom | one single bedroom | bathroom | pretty rear South facing garden | garage in block.
Energy Rating E
Unfurnished - Available 10th May 2017

NEW



DASHWOOD ROAD
£825 pcm
A well presented spacious two bedroomed first floor apartment conveniently located within walking distance of the town centre and Banbury train station.
| communal entrance with security system | hallway | lounge | kitchen with integrated white goods | master bedroom with en-suite shower room and built in wardrobe | further double bedroom with built in wardrobe | bathroom | allocated parking | communal storage.
Energy Rating C
Unfurnished - Available 26th May 2017



BARFORD ST MICHAEL
£840 pcm
A well presented two bedroomed semi detached bungalow situated in this pretty village South of Banbury.
| hallway | lounge | fitted kitchen | two double bedrooms | family bathroom | good sized gardens to front and rear | garage.
Energy Rating F
Unfurnished - Available 23rd May 2017



WINDERTON
£695 pcm
A newly decorated two bedroomed listed cottage with versatile accommodation in this pretty rural village to the West of Banbury.
| entrance hall | cloakroom | fitted kitchen | good sized lounge | dining room | two double bedrooms | newly fitted bathroom | gardens to rear | allocated parking space | NO PETS
Unfurnished - Available Immediately



BANBURY
£550 pcm
A well presented studio apartment in the heart of Banbury town centre.
| kitchen area with white goods | living room/bedroom | bathroom.
Energy Rating C
Unfurnished - Available Immediately



CULWORTH
£750 pcm
A delightful middle terraced two bedroomed cottage located in this popular village East of Banbury.
| lounge/dining room | fitted kitchen with freestanding cooker and fridge/freezer | double bedroom | single bedroom | family bathroom | pretty gardens to front and rear | garage | off street parking | no pets.
Energy Rating D
Unfurnished - Available Immediately



BODICOTE
£895 pcm
A beautifully presented, two bedroomed terraced cottage, newly refurbished to a high standard situated in this popular village to the South of Banbury.
| lounge with wood burning stove | newly fitted kitchen/dining room with white goods | one double bedroom | one single bedroom - both with built in wardrobes | newly fitted bathroom | courtyard garden to rear with out building | off street parking for one vehicle | no pets | would ideally suit professional couple/single person.
Energy Rating C
Part Furnished - Available Immediately

LONDON YARD



PARSONS STREET
£695 pcm
A two bedroomed first floor duplex apartment located in the heart of Banbury town centre.
| hallway | spacious open plan kitchen/living room with white goods | bathroom | stairs leading to two double bedrooms with built in wardrobes to each.
Energy Rating C
Unfurnished - Available Immediately



THE MAGNOLIAS
£825 pcm
A newly decorated three bedroomed semi detached house on a corner plot situated within good proximity of Banbury town centre and the M40 motorway.
| hallway | lounge | kitchen/diner | two double bedrooms | single bedroom/nursery | bathroom | rear garden | parking.
Energy Rating C
Unfurnished - Available Mid May 2017



MORETON PINKNEY
£1,150 pcm
Situated in this well served picturesque village, this spacious four bedroomed, detached property benefits from good sized rear garden, garage and driveway.
| entrance hall | dining room | cloakroom | lounge | master bedroom with en-suite bathroom | three further double bedrooms | family bathroom | occasional room/study above garage | gardens to front and rear | garage and driveway.
Energy Rating E
Unfurnished - Available Immediately



ANGELICA CLOSE
£850 pcm
A well presented two bedroomed house located on this popular development to the North of Banbury.
| entrance hall | cloakroom | lounge | kitchen/dining room | two double bedrooms | bathroom | enclosed rear garden | off road parking for two vehicles.
Energy Rating C
Unfurnished - Available 22nd April 2017



BEAULIEU CLOSE
£875 pcm
A very well presented two bedroomed semi-detached house located on the north side of Banbury within easy reach of the M40 motorway, Banbury railway station and town centre.
| lounge | brand new fitted kitchen/breakfastroom | conservatory | double bedroom | single bedroom | bathroom | pretty garden to the rear | garage | off street parking |
Energy Rating D
Unfurnished - Available end April/beginning May 2017

Inspired by nature

After the explosion of the tropics, plants and animal prints seen in home design and fashion, it seems like an understandable progression to move towards more pared down nature-inspired furnishings. This aesthetic has something about it the eye naturally recognises; a jug reminiscent of a lagoon, a candle holder that looks like a plant, for example, all in natural-looking materials and colours. These pickings are muted and classically chic. Plus your home will have such an outdoors feel you'll never need to leave...



Bamboo drinks trolley,
Oliver Bonas, £395



Lamp, Debenhams,
£80



Green cushion,
HomeSense,
£12.99



Lagoon inspired
blue jug,
HomeSense,



Daisy patterned plate,
HomeSense £5.99



Marble pestle
and mortar,
Debenhams, £30



Palm tree candle holder,
Debenhams, £25

The why & how of getting a bespoke kitchen

Why go bespoke?

WHEN the word "bespoke" is used to describe a kitchen, it refers to one that's been designed for and by you and handmade from scratch, maximising the space available. A truly bespoke kitchen will make the most of the architectural space available.

Added to that, you can also have whatever specifications you want (can afford) – a bespoke kitchen is built around you rather than you having to adapt your ideas to an off-the-shelf solution which is a generic, "one size fits all" approach where compromises invariably have to be made.

A key benefit of a kitchen designed around you is that you can specify any non-standard dimension or detail you desire. Say if you have sloping ceilings, you can ask for bespoke storage to fit the non-standard space.

There's a huge range of finishes, materials, colours, fittings and styles to choose from, therefore you want a company with a proven reputation.

Get a personal recommendation

NOTHING is better than hearing about the company through word of mouth. Ask family and friends for their experiences and speak to companies who provide a bespoke service in your area. You'll want to know whether they stick to schedule and how well they are able to turn the customer's visions into reality.

...or research the company well

If you can't get a recommendation choose an established company with a reputation for hand-crafted joinery – the foundation of your new kitchen – and one that is prepared to listen. Ask the kitchen company if you can view some of their previous projects; they are usually more than happy to arrange this.

Use the opportunity not only to look at the quality of the fitting, but to quiz the homeowner. How well does the company respond to problems and what is their aftercare service like? Do the kitchen fitters make much mess and do they provide a skip?

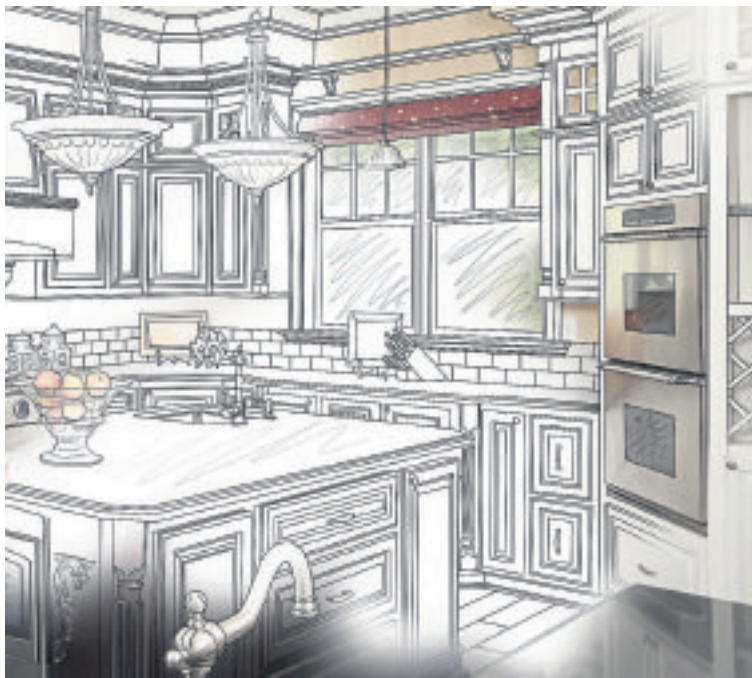
Prepare before your first meeting

BEFORE your first meeting with a designer, go online to help you pinpoint the style you want. Start building a mood board using a website such as Pinterest and soon you'll see certain recurring themes.

These will be the foundation for your new kitchen. Take your wish-list of appliances and any inspirations you have.

You may not know exactly what you want, but it is a great starting point for discussion. If you have a floor-plan of the room then that will be helpful too.

A good designer will be able to interpret your mood board and establish what is important to you. Ask for a meeting at your home so the designer can get to know your style and better understand the brief.



kitchen confidential

- Choose the granite colour before the paint colour, it's a much easier way around in the long run.
- Take samples home to look at them in the light of the room. try to hold them the way they will really be, so the granite would be horizontal and the unit sample colour board be vertical, try to have your flooring sample on site at the same time if possible.
- The cost: A bespoke kitchen can start at anything from around £18,000 to £35,000 – and can obviously go up dramatically, into the hundreds of thousands, if you have a long list of very specific requirements and expensive finishes. Have a clear budget in mind at the outset. You can be frank and upfront about it.

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The march of the millennials

The tech-savvy, smart, well informed generation of 20 to 30-somethings are predicted to make up three quarters of the global workforce by 2025.

And because they'll soon be the major players in our workplace, HR managers and recruiters are finding they need to adapt their approach to attract and retain this section of the work force.

If you are forging your own career in HR? Here's what you need to do.

Paint a picture: Millennials love

visuals so would-be employers need to have an engaging online presence. Attracting potential stars means looking as good as possible so get a well-designed, easy to navigate, mobile-friendly website. Ditch overly wordy descriptions in favour of videos, images and infographics and keep business jargon to a minimum.

If you have a blog page then keep it up-to-date.

Embrace technology: Tech-dependent millennials are never without some sort of device. Think of mobile phones and tablets as the modern equivalent of Linus'

comfort blanket. This means an HR manager worth their salt will be up to speed with the latest work-enabling technology.

Have a warm welcome: Thanks to social media millennials are a gregarious bunch and many will be looking to become part of a community as much as land a job. This means if you want to become a top recruitment consultant, you need to highlight a company's social side such as parties, away-days, sporting events and community outreach programmes.

Offer more than the money: Company culture is important to

millennials. A solid salary simply doesn't cut it anymore. Part-time and flexible working, maternity and paternity leave, volunteering opportunities and a 'go green' ethos are all high on the millennial wish list.

Offer access to thrills in skills: Learning and development opportunities can be nearly as attractive as a good salary and fancy job title. Firms that invest time in training, mentoring and secondments are going to be more appealing. It pays to manage our millennials – remember they're the bosses of the future.



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